

# Press Release Baker-Polito Administration Awards \$703,000 Dam Grant for Lancelot Lake in Sherwood Forest

For immediate release: 12/05/2019

- Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
- Sherwood Forest Lake District, a governmental district located in the Town of Becket

## 2019 Sherwood Forest Lake District, Lancelot Lake Dam - \$703,000 Grant

On Thursday December 5, 2019 the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' Dam and Seawall Program awarded Sherwood Forest Lake District \$703,000 thousand dollars grant for the rehabilitation of Lancelot Lake dam in Sherwood Forest, Becket, Massachusetts. The grant is designed to repair and reconstruct Lancelot Lake dam, which is a critical infrastructure in the Sherwood Forest community and the Town of Becket. Given the documented changes in the occurrences of extreme weather, the funds will enable the district to complete the work needed before an intense precipitation event occurs. Governor Baker has stated that grants like this ensure municipalities and districts as municipal entities can improve their resiliency to climate change from hazards such as inland flooding and thereby reduce municipal vulnerability, safeguard economic investments and protect vital natural resources, freshwater animals and plants and resident fish species habitat.

The Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Fund was established in 2013 by the Massachusetts Legislature to promote public health, public safety, and ecological restoration. The Dam and Seawall Repair or Removal Program offers financial resources to qualified applicants for projects that enhance, preserve, and protect the natural resources and the scenic, historic and aesthetic qualities of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Award of these grants is very competitive. The District filed a detailed grant application that was supported by a complete engineering analysis.

The Sherwood Forest Lake District is run by a 8 member Prudential Committee, who are volunteers who own homes in the District. The members of the District are property owners who live in the District and they are called the proprietors. The District Bylaws note the "maintenance of the social and economic health of the property within the District depends on maintaining the significant scenic, recreational, educational, scientific, natural and public health values provided by said lakes." Also, the District Bylaws state there is a recognized public interest in preserving and enhancing the special values provided by the lakes both for residents of the District and residents of the Town and in the Westfield River watershed area. The proprietors of the District found that" it is imperative that the District establish sustainable environmental practices to maintain the lakes for public health and safety benefits."

In 2013 in an effort to determine the appropriate hazard classification of dams in the Commonwealth the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Office of Dam Safety (ODS) had GZA GeoEnvironmental Inc. inspect Lancelot Lake Dam. The Hydrological and Hydraulic analysis and Dam Breech analysis concluded that the Lancelot Lake Dam, a heavily wooded 19-foot high, 450 ft. long earthen berm was in in poor condition. Furthermore, it was determined to be a "High Hazard" level dam because structural failure will likely cause loss of life and serious damage to homes, industrial or commercial facilities, essential public utilities, main highways or railroads in the downstream inundation area. In 2016 The Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs' (EEA) Dam and Seawall Program awarded the Sherwood Forest Lake District a grant of \$52,500 to support the planning, engineering and permitting phase of the Lancelot Lake Dam to return this critical infrastructure element to acceptable safety standards.